



Healthy Teens Network

Energy Drinks: Power or hype?

Energy drink makers often make promises that their drinks will increase energy as well as athletic performance. Once you get through the hype and flashy marketing, you are mostly getting a stiff dose of sugar and caffeine. Here are some facts to keep in mind when it comes to energy drinks:

- Most energy drinks contain excessive sugar and calories, and contribute to weight gain and tooth decay.
- They are also full of caffeine, which can cause side effects such as an upset stomach, headaches or sleeping problems. All these factors can drag you down—not power you up.
- They may also contain mysterious ingredients like guarana (a source of caffeine) or taurine (an amino acid thought to enhance caffeine). Some contain herbal substances that are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration.
- The best energy boost comes from living a healthy lifestyle including eating well, drinking water, getting plenty of rest and enough physical activity.

Smart Snacking

Are you getting hunger pains more often? This is natural during adolescence because your body needs more nutrients to grow. Snacks are a good way to satisfy that hunger; but make sure that it's a healthy snack.

A snack that is high in fat and calories will only slow you down. If you want to keep your energy levels going and avoid weight gain, steer clear from foods with a lot of simple carbohydrates (sugars) like candy bars and soda. Choose snacks that contain complex carbohydrates such as peanut butter, fruit, and low fat yogurt or cheese.

Why exercise is good for you

Good exercise will benefit every part of the body, including the mind. Exercising will cause your body to release endorphins; the chemicals that make a person feel peaceful and happy.

Exercising can also help you look better. A teen that exercises will burn excess calories and will look more toned than a teen that does not.

Exercising to maintain a healthy weight will help to decrease a person's risk of developing certain diseases, including type-2 diabetes and high blood pressure. These diseases are found mostly in adults, but are now becoming more common in teens.

Note: This information is for educational purposes only. For specific medical advice or nutritional requirements, please consult your doctor.